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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 09 GENEVA 000971

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR T, VI AND EUR/PRA
DOE FOR NNSA/NA-24
CIA FOR WINPAC
JCS FOR J5/DDGSA
SECDEF FOR OSD(P)/STRATCAP
NAVY FOR CNO-N5JA AND DIRSSP
AIRFORCE FOR HQ USAF/ASX AND ASXP
DTRA FOR OP-OS OP-OSA AND DIRECTOR
NSC FOR LOOK
DIA FOR LEA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/05/2019

TAGS: [KACT](#) [MARR](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [RS](#) [US](#) [START](#)

SUBJECT: START FOLLOW-ON NEGOTIATIONS, GENEVA (SFO-GVA-VI):
(U) U.S.-HOSTED RECEPTION, OCTOBER 29, 2009

Classified By: A/S Rose E. Gottemoeller, United States
START Negotiator. Reasons: 1.4(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (U) This is SFO-GVA-VI-023.

[1](#)2. (U) Meeting Date: October 29, 2009
Time: 7:00 - 9:00 P.M.
Place: U.S. Mission, Geneva

SUMMARY

[1](#)3. (S) The U.S. Delegation hosted a reception for the Russian Delegation at the U.S. Mission in Geneva on October 29, 2009. Two Russian Delegation members from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) indicated they had received instructions to complete the treaty during the November session. Several Russians provided insights on the dynamics within their delegation. Russian Ministry of Defense (MOD) delegates argued their positions on heavy bomber counting rules, unique identifiers, the impacts of inspections on readiness and other mobile missile issues, deployed versus non-deployed missiles and launchers, and inspection of warhead storage areas. Votkinsk closure costs and payments were also raised. Gen Maj Poznihir commented on Russian and Soviet nuclear doctrines and their continued impact on arms control. Mr. Leontiev commented on budget cuts and personnel shifts in the MFA. Admiral Kuznetsov expounded on Russian-American cooperation, Russia-China relations, and North Korea. Biographical information on several members of the Russian Delegation was also obtained.

[1](#)4. (U) SUBJECT SUMMARY: START Follow-on: "Git 'er Done";

Dynamics Within the Russian Delegation; Inspection Issues; Votkinsk Portal Monitoring Facility Closure; Russian and Soviet Doctrines and Arms Control Today; Changes Underway in the MFA; The World According to Kuznetsov; and, Biographical Information.

START FOLLOW-ON:
"GIT 'ER DONE"

15. (S) Mr. Ivanov told Mr. Strauss he had planned to marry in November but was told by his superiors he would likely have to postpone the marriage, as they were not sure SFO negotiations would finish on schedule. Ivanov said his delegation had grown to 40 people, and they were going to bring in more for the November session. The orders from above were to "get this done." Ivanov considered his role here in Geneva as calming down the hardliners on the delegation. Leontiev told Ms. Purcell that, when the Russian Delegation returned to Geneva in November, the plan was to continue through December 4th. Leontiev noted, however, that the treaty text should be completed in November, to allow time to prepare it for signature.

DYNAMICS WITHIN THE
RUSSIAN DELEGATION

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16. (S) Colonel Pischulov commented to Lt Lobner that he had been up until 2:00 A.M. the day prior reviewing text for one of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Working Group meetings. Pischulov added that many of the Russians had worked long hours preparing texts and notes for their bosses. He pointed out that a break would be welcomed by many of his colleagues. Pischulov also told Lobner he had been on the General Staff for some time, but was only recently directed to support the SFO negotiations. He added it was frustrating that, although he was very familiar with Russian and U.S. force structures, some of the more senior Russian personnel in the negotiations were not.

17. (S) Ms. Melikbekian told Mrs. Zdravecky she was nervous about assuming the responsibility as sole lawyer for the Russian Delegation because Ms. Kotkova planned to stay in Moscow during the next round of talks in November. Melikbekian said she would be in regular mobile phone communication with Kotkova to ask what she should do about issues that arise in the negotiations.

18. (S) Mr. Artem'yev talked to Brown about the organization of the conforming group, recalling that, during the START negotiations, he had been a working group chair rather than a member of the conforming group, and had forgotten whether working group chairs participated in the conforming group meetings when the conforming group discussed the articles negotiated by that working group. Brown stated that the working group chairs did not normally participate because the conforming group was not empowered to make substantive changes in the texts, but that issues could be taken back to the working groups for further discussion, noting that this had occurred not infrequently during START. Artem'yev asked how much time would be devoted to conforming. Brown responded that it took a considerable amount of time after all the major issues had been resolved in START to finish conforming and that the two sides should begin to conform texts as soon as they were available, noting that there was already some text coming from the Conversion or Elimination Working Group. Artem'yev recalled that there had been a number of conforming changes that had been necessary to make several weeks after signature of the START Treaty--Brown confirmed that he had been part of that process and that this was not an experience that he wanted to repeat.

INSPECTION ISSUES

¶9. (S) Pischulov discussed the Russian rationale behind retaining the START categories of heavy bombers with Lobner. He explained that, fundamentally, both Parties always seemed to want more restrictions on systems that the other Party did not possess. In this manner, he argued, Russia wanted to stay informed about the various locations and movements of each type of heavy bomber. He continued that it was similar to the U.S. concept with respect to mobile ICBM launcher restrictions and unique bases for them. Pischulov noted that, to his surprise, the United States had accepted much of the Russian proposal regarding the structure of the MOU.

¶10. (S) Mr. Connell asked Col Kamenskiy a question concerning Russian issues with Treaty Article VIII, and the differences in legislation concerning release of information

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that existed at the time of the signature of START versus those presently in effect. Kamenskiy related that, to the best of his knowledge, there were no substantive differences.

However, he recognized international treaties trumped national legislation, and the Russian Federation was not anxious to involve itself in another situation in which a new treaty would put them in a position where their internal laws would be rendered moot.

¶11. (S) Switching topics, Kamenskiy complained to Connell about the U.S.-proposed text in paragraph 4 of Article IX concerning the need for UIDs for ICBMs for mobile launchers of missiles. Becoming rather animated on the topic, he appeared intent on driving home the point that it was not necessary to have a UID to facilitate national technical means (NTM) of verification. Connell explained that the UID served as an important nexus between NTM, notifications, and inspections in tracking a system throughout its lifecycle, to which Kamenskiy argued that, in that case, the paragraph should be relocated to another treaty article to allow for the remaining questions of the NTM article to be resolved. Alluding to the Russian side's basic position on UIDs, Kamenskiy questioned the overall need for a UID, and suggested the concept be dropped from the treaty altogether.

¶12. (S) Col Zaitsev complained to Purcell that Russia had tried to simplify START provisions in accordance with official U.S. statements that this was the goal. Russia had been very disappointed to find that the United States proposed a follow-on treaty that carried over START's complex and burdensome details, but the Russian Delegation had made extensive compromises to move toward the U.S. approach.

¶13. (S) Zaitsev vehemently argued Russia's positions on mobile ICBM forces and counting rules during discussions with Purcell and Mr. DeNinno. Among the key reasons why the Russian military decided against extending START was to halt portal monitoring at Votkinsk, which was not reciprocal, and to relieve the mobile ICBM forces from the frequent disruptions to their combat training schedule caused by inspections and cooperative measures. According to Zaitsev, inspection activities at mobile ICBM bases were very detrimental to military training plans.

¶14. (S) Referring to concerns posed by several Russian Delegation members that road mobiles had to be taken off alert during cooperative measures inspections, DeNinno asked Zaitsev how such inspections affected readiness. Zaitsev hesitated, but then responded that when a launcher was pulled out of its fixed structure, its accuracy was degraded and it took some time to bring the launcher back to readiness. DeNinno asked whether a missile unit was affected more during an RVOSI or the much shorter cooperative measures. Zaitsev replied that technical preparation, such as disconnecting and

reconnecting the mobile launchers, took more time than the United States thought.

¶15. (S) According to Zaitsev, if the measures were reciprocal--he used the example of being applicable to U.S. SSBN forces--then they would be tolerable. The most unfair U.S. proposal in the SFO was numerical limits on non-deployed mobile launchers and mobile ICBMs. Such limits also were inconsistent with the commitment to give each Party the flexibility to determine its force structure. Zaitsev

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challenged the United States to propose numerical limits on all non-deployed missiles and all non-deployed launchers, saying Russia could accept any limits that also applied to the United States.

¶16. (S) When DeNinno pointed out to Zaitsev and Col Voloskov that each missile system required its own set of specific inspection and verification procedures, and that procedures that work for mobile missiles are not adaptable for SLBM or even silo ICBM bases, both nodded their heads in agreement but said nothing. DeNinno then commented that, if Russia believed inspections at road-mobile facilities were seriously detrimental to training or readiness, then Russia should propose workable alternative inspection procedures that would still allow U.S. inspectors to verify the required data.

¶17. (S) Zaitsev also argued that the U.S. concept that launchers would be considered deployed throughout their lifetime made no sense. Russia had a number of silo launchers that had not been combat ready for years, and should not be considered deployed. The silos were awaiting a new missile type that had not yet been built. Poznihir interjected with the example of a newly-produced submarine and argued it should not be considered deployed before it completed sea trials and had missiles loaded into it.

¶18. (S) Zaitsev then brought up Russia's proposal for a single numerical limit on all launchers, both deployed and non-deployed. He did not understand why the U.S. side had rejected that useful concept. He claimed the limit could be made higher if it was too low for the U.S. side. If the United States wanted to avoid sending an excessive number of notifications, Zaitsev said Russia could agree that notifications of a change from deployed to non-deployed and back again would not be needed when a missile in a launcher was simply replaced.

¶19. (S) Zaitsev reacted negatively to DeNinno's questions as to whether Russia might permit inspections inside its weapons storage areas. According to Zaitsev, it would be necessary to shroud everything and not permit inspection of items not subject to the treaty, so inspections would do nothing to alleviate suspicions or concerns. Moreover, reentry vehicles were not actually visible or inspectable, since all were in containers. Zaitsev saw no value in inspecting warhead containers. He had been on an inspection at the Silverdale Weapons Storage Area; there were many weapons bunkers there, but his team was only allowed inside one of them. Zaitsev concluded that the only way to count heavy bomber warheads was to attribute an arbitrary number to each heavy bomber. The U.S. side could choose whether that number should be one, two, or three, etc.

¶20. (S) DeNinno commented to Poznihir and Zaitsev that, if Russia disagreed with a U.S. proposal, Russia could offer alternatives rather than merely questioning the U.S. logic. Poznihir agreed that Russia has expressed disagreement with many aspects of U.S. proposals just as the United States disagreed with certain aspects of Russian proposals. Poznihir said he was ready to answer any questions we had. When DeNinno asked why Russia did not consider restrictions on the number of non-deployed missiles in SFO, Poznihir responded that there was no need for such limitations. Poznihir pointed out that the United States offered a limit

of 800 total SDVs but the United States knew well that Russia would have less than 500 and asked whether DeNinno thought that was fair. DeNinno commented that Russia had yet to make a complete presentation on its implementation concepts. Poznihir responded that he would be prepared to give a presentation as soon as the United States requested.

¶21. (S) Poznihir also discussed the topic of mobile systems with Mr. Colby, repeating the standard Russian position that opposed singling out such systems for special treatment. He challenged Colby to defend the rationale behind the U.S. position. Colby responded that the United States was not seeking to impact the survivability of Russian mobile systems with its proposals but, instead, was seeking to develop a regime that would provide sufficient confidence regarding numbers of treaty-limited items; confidence that would, in turn, undergird and enable the treaty's ceilings and other provisions.

¶22. (S) Given this focus on verifying numbers, rather than on operational characteristics, Colby challenged Poznihir to propose a satisfactory verification regime for mobile systems. Poznihir rejected the idea and, instead, said somewhat jocularly that the Russian side might choose to propose a 150 launcher limit on SSBNs during the next session, and asked what the United States would think about that. Colby responded he was sure Poznihir could anticipate the reaction to such a proposal. Poznihir provided this same anecdote in response to a similar question from DeNinno.

 VOTKINSK PORTAL MONITORING
 FACILITY CLOSURE

¶23. (S) Mr. Smirnov spoke with Mr. Smith regarding payment for the cost of services requested by the United States related to the closure of the Votkinsk Portal Monitoring Facility. In accordance with the cost settlement document recently signed, normal cost settlement practices would be followed to pay for such services as packing material, cranes, and trucks for the transport of materials to the local dump, for example. Specifically, the local Votkinsk facility would pay for those services in advance and then bill the United States after the fact. Smirnov stated that this would be a problem for the Votkinsk facility because, when the bill is paid by the United States, the money goes to the Russian MOD and Votkinsk never gets reimbursed. Smirnov asked if the Defense Threat Reduction Agency could pay Votkinsk directly, based upon informal procedures so that no additional documents would have to be negotiated. Smith asked what would happen when the monitors asked for services at Votkinsk that the Russian Government had already agreed to provide. Smirnov emphasized that the services would be provided and the work would get done but it would be a tremendous burden on the Votkinsk facility as there was no additional money for Votkinsk closure in the budget. Smith asked Smirnov if he had tried to resolve this issue with the Russian MOD. Smirnov replied that he had been working on it for a year and it was impossible to resolve. Smith told Smirnov that he would convey the situation back to Washington. Smirnov thanked him for such consideration.

¶24. (S) In a separate conversation with Mr. Elliott,

Smirnov briefly discussed the U.S. proposal on ICBMs for mobile launchers and, in doing so, indicated that Russia would probably agree to notifications related to missile exits, but would never agree to placing cameras at Votkinsk. He commented that a camera would be watching all of the time, unlike a human being that watched only when something was

coming or going.

RUSSIAN AND SOVIET NUCLEAR
DOCTRINES AND ARMS CONTROL TODAY

¶25. (S) Colby spoke at some length with Poznihir about Russian and Soviet nuclear doctrine, policy, and command and control. Colby asked for Poznihir's understanding of Soviet-era doctrine regarding responses to U.S. policy on limited nuclear strikes in light of recently declassified interviews with influential Soviet officials (e.g., the Schlesinger Doctrine). Poznihir responded that Soviet policy was always to respond strongly to even limited attacks because of the vulnerability of Soviet command and control capabilities, and emphasized that this remained Russia's policy. (Begin comment: It was not clear whether such a response would necessarily be total, or could take a more limited form, although it seemed that the latter was possible. End comment.)

¶26. (S) Poznihir then directed the discussion toward conventionally-armed ballistic missiles. He argued that strikes with such weapons would be seriously dangerous because Russia would be forced, because of the vulnerabilities of its command and control systems, to assume that such missiles were directed against it, regardless of the stated intentions of the United States. Further, because such weapons were supposed to strike fleeting targets, there would be a limited time period to make any notification. These factors would leave only a few minutes for a decision about response. Colby retorted that, in addition to the notifications and clear statements of benign intentions the United States would clearly work to provide and which would be subject to discussion between the Parties in other contexts, Poznihir's argument would logically be best addressed by Russia developing capabilities that would allow discrimination among different types of missile launches and which would allow Moscow, regardless of the stated intentions of the United States, to deliberate judiciously about appropriate responses. A central point of arms control was, Colby contended, to encourage stabilizing postures. Further technical solutions could be the subject of productive discussion. Colby also pointed out that the logic of Poznihir's argument that any usage, however limited, of strategic forces would require a worst-case response would seem clearly to call into question the new Russian security doctrine calling for limited strategic strikes. Poznihir did not take the bait, but seemed to acknowledge the problem.

CHANGES UNDERWAY IN THE MFA

¶27. (S) Leontiev told Zdravecky, Mr. Couch, and Mr. Coussa that the Russian Administration had mandated a 20 percent cut across the board in ministry budgets for 2010. Leontiev

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hoped the SFO talks would not continue into January as there would be less money for delegation members.

¶28. (S) Leontiev also commented to Purcell about personnel changes in the Russian MFA. North American Department Director Neverov had been named Russian Ambassador to Sweden, and had already left or would shortly. Neverov's deputy, Burmistrov, was temporarily acting as Department Director, but Darchiyev, currently posted at the Russian Embassy in Washington, would replace Neverov. Burmistrov would then return to serving as deputy. Yermakov was director of a strategic affairs office in the Department of Security and Disarmament Issues (DVBR), that was responsible for START, INF, missile defense, and military uses of space. Yermakov was supposed to participate in the SFO negotiations, but was said to be suffering from health problems (NFI), which kept

him in Moscow. Leontiev noted he himself had been posted to Washington a few years ago. He had worked on international issues, while Yermakov had worked on political-military issues.

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO KUZNETSOV

¶29. (S) Kuznetsov talked to Mr. Brown and Dr. Fraley about his efforts to increase military cooperation with NATO and in particular with the United States while serving as senior Russian military representative to NATO. Kuznetsov said that when he first raised the idea of military cooperation as an alternative to continuing military competition and the arms race with his military superiors in Moscow, they thought that he was crazy, but it seemed now to Kuznetsov that he had been proven correct. Kuznetsov said he had even advanced the idea that Russia let all nuclear arms control agreements with the United States lapse and then make decisions on nuclear policy based solely on national interest and capability, much as France, England, and China do, although this idea had also been dismissed by his superiors.

¶30. (S) Kuznetsov observed that the U.S. Navy had historically been the most reluctant to engage in training opportunities with the Russian Navy. He could never understand the U.S. Navy's reluctance, noting that he had not seen the same reluctance with the other Services in the U.S. armed forces where there was a history of cooperation and joint training with Russian forces. He mentioned, in particular, the opportunity for U.S.-Russian naval cooperation in the area of counterterrorism in the Mediterranean, citing NATO Operation Active Endeavor. Brown remarked that, while his son was serving on a U.S. naval vessel several years ago, his son's ship had a very positive interaction with the Russian destroyer Admiral Chabanenko while in the Mediterranean, including a visit to the Russian ship, and that this seemed to be a good example of how the situation was changing in terms of such opportunities for U.S.-Russian naval cooperation. Kuznetsov agreed, noting that this was what he had been talking about--such cooperation was a better alternative to military competition and would ultimately be in the security interests of Russia.

¶31. (S) Colby also spoke with Kuznetsov for some time. Kuznetsov spent the bulk of the conversation expounding on his views on a variety of issues, ranging from the position

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of the United States in the world to arms control. Of particular interest, he stated, in response to Colby's question about how Russia and Kuznetsov personally perceived the rise of China, that he had been involved with the Chinese for some 15 to 20 years, and noted their deliberate, careful approach. Kuznetsov said that he had also been involved for some time in the Sino-Russian military-to-military relationship, and that for many years the Russians had not been able to determine how the relationship would develop. However, in recent years, cooperation had taken a more concrete form, especially in the counterterrorism field. Kuznetsov said that this relationship could be broadened to more significant areas of strategic cooperation, but it seemed from his appraisal that this was unclear and perhaps unlikely. He also said that, more broadly, Russia did not think that China posed any serious threat to Russia in the next 15 to 20 years, but beyond then he could not say. He also noted that Russian arms sales to China would enmesh the two countries for upwards of the next 20 years.

¶32. (S) Kuznetsov also stated that North Korea would be willing to come to an agreement with the United States if the United States would engage with Pyongyang bilaterally, but it was not clear from the discussion whether that would realistically include a verifiable disarmament deal. Kuznetsov's bottom line, however, was that North Korea could

be "bought" in some metaphorical sense.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

¶33. (S) The following biographical information on Russian Delegation members Col Ilin, Gen Maj Orlov, Poznihir and Zaitsev was obtained during conversations between these individuals and Dr. Warner. Ilin said he worked directly for Mr. Gorbunov in the MOD. Ilin described Gorbunov as the lead deputy defense minister for policy matters, similar to the post held by USD/P Flournoy. (Begin comment: Aleksandr Gorbunov attended the initial SFO negotiating session in Moscow in May 2009. End Comment.) Orlov, who had earlier been a Lieutenant General and deputy head of the Air Forces Main Staff, was demoted as the Russian MOD drastically reduced its cadre of general officers. Orlov was now the deputy head of the Main Operations Directorate in the General Staff. Contrary to recent finished biographical intelligence reports, Orlov was observed smoking cigarettes at this reception and on other occasions. Poznihir said he was a veteran Strategic Rocket Forces officer and headed a subordinate directorate in the Main Operations Directorate of the General Staff, falling under Orlov's direction. Colonel Zaitsev, a graduate of Bauman Technical Institute, had been working arms control matters in the General Staff since 1989. He was apparently on the brink of retirement from the military, but would likely stay in the MOD, or possibly in the General Staff, as a civilian.

¶34. (S) Melikbekian, the new Russian legal advisor, told Purcell this was the first time she had worked on development of a treaty, although she often read existing treaties. She was not used to military terminology. Melikbekian told Zdravecky that she had been working for the MFA as a lawyer for just a few months. In that time, she had traveled to Bern, Switzerland, with President Medvedev in September 2009,

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and had just returned from a 10-day business trip to Beijing, China the week before coming to Geneva for the SFO talks. Melikbekian worked for Kotkova in the MFA legal department. This was her first visit to Geneva, but she had not been able to see the city at all since arriving. She was staying at the Mission hotel. Melikbekian claimed she had also studied Arabic and spent six weeks in Syria as part of her language studies (Begin comment: Presumably a civilian school program. End Comment.), but had forgotten much of the Arabic she learned due to lack of use. Melikbekian was apparently not married. When asked about missing her family during her travels, she said only that she had not been able to call her mother. She also mentioned having fielded numerous overly personal questions in China about her "boyfriends." She appeared to be approximately 25 to 30 years old.

¶35. (S) Ivanov told Strauss he was a graduate of Moscow State Institute of Foreign Relations and had spent the last nine years in the MFA. He had been stationed in Ottawa and had traveled to both New York and Washington, DC, during his tour in Canada. Prior to joining the MFA, Ivanov was in politics and had worked for Yegor Gaidar. Ivanov said he was 32 years old and was born in Morocco where his father, a career diplomat, was stationed. Ivanov said he was fluent in French and English, having learned French while living in Casablanca and Paris, where his father had been posted for two tours.

¶36. (S) Mr. Dwyer spoke with Ms. Zharkih and learned this was her first time working START Treaty issues and that she would return to Geneva to participate in the next round of negotiations scheduled to begin November 9. Zharkih mentioned she had worked on the newly established U.S.-Russian Federation Energy and Nonproliferation Working Group and had met Department of Energy (DOE) Secretary Chu and DOE Deputy Secretary Poneman at a recent meeting between

Sergey Kiriyyenko (Rosatom Director) and Chu. Zharkih said she was a graduate of Moscow State Institute of International Studies. She queried Dwyer as to where and why he learned Russian and if he had focused on Russian studies or nonproliferation studies in his graduate program.

¶37. (U) Ries sends.
GRIFFITHS